

WASHINGTON
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N. Y. Woman Released; Fliers Awaited

Reds Free Singer

BERLIN, March 27 (UPI)—The release of an American woman from an East German prison was announced today as U. S. military authorities awaited the "momentary" return of two Air Force officers held captive by the Soviets.

A U. S. spokesman said the woman, 40-year-old New York City singer, Gabriele Hammerstein was freed after more than two years in prison and flown to the U. S. late yesterday. She was arrested in East Berlin in January, 1962, and sentenced to six years in prison on charges the communists have never disclosed.

Military officials said the two Air Force officers could be freed at any time today. They indicated that first word of their release might come from President Johnson's Easter vacation White House in Johnson City, Tex.

SHOT DOWN

The airmen, Capt. David I. Holland, 35, of Holland, Minn., and Capt. Melvin Kessler, 30, of Philadelphia, were shot down over East Germany March 10 when their RB-66 bomber strayed across the border. A third crewman, injured in para-

chuting from the plane, was freed last week.

The injured crewman, Lieut. Harold W. Welch, 24, of Detroit, is recovering from arm and leg fractures.

There was no indication that Miss Hammerstein's release was connected with the case of the airmen.

The White House, in announcing the imminent release of Messrs. Kessler and Holland yesterday, said there are "no implications to be drawn" of any trade or deal for the freedom of the airmen. It made no mention of any other American prisoners.

CLEMENCY APPEAL

A U. S. spokesman said Miss Hammerstein was released "on the basis of a clemency appeal submitted by her lawyer on behalf of her family. Miss Hammerstein's mother, Dr. Gertrude Rosenhain of Jackson Heights, New York City, based the appeal on her 40-year-old daughter's poor health.

Miss Hammerstein had been in Berlin about two years before her arrest. She described herself as a singer and freelance writer. She had told news-

men here she had good contacts with the East, including communist propagandist Gerhart Eisler, who jumped bail in the U. S. to flee to East Germany.

One other American is known to remain in an East German prison. He is Jean F. Loba, 39, of Altadena, Calif., who is serving a two and one-half year term for trying to help East Germans escape to the west.